

Minutes of the Information Management Panel Friday, November 4, 2005

Paulson called the meeting to order at 8:35 a.m. and led the committee in the pledge of allegiance.

Present: Supervisors Jim Behrend, Duane Paulson and Bill Mitchell and Citizen Jim Herzfeld. **Absent:** Supervisor Genia Bruce.

Also Present: Information Systems Manager Michael Biagioli, Consultant Donn Hoffmann, Applications Development Administrator Wayne Naegle, Systems Technology Administrator Al Mundt, Radio Services Administrator Chris Pettersen, Collections and Business Services Manager Sean Sander, Chief of Staff Lee Esler, Office Services Coordinator Windy Jicha.

Correspondence

- Flyer for the Wisconsin Digital Government Summit scheduled for November 29 at the Monona Terrace Community and Convention Center in Madison.

MOTION: Behrend moved, Mitchell second, to approve mileage reimbursement for members of the Information Management Panel attending the Wisconsin Digital Government Summit on November 29 in Madison. Motion carried: 4-0.

Approve Minutes of September 2, 2005

MOTION: Herzfeld moved, Behrend second, to approve the meeting minutes of September 2, 2005. Motion carried: 4-0.

Upcoming Meetings

- December 9

Future Agenda Items

- Review of Information Technology Plans for 2006

Update on the Implementation of the Mobile Data Computing Public Safety Infrastructure

Tuma said they received an award letter this week alerting the county it got the Homeland Security grant for \$800K. The money will be used to purchase MDC units, radio/modem units, software license costs for users to access the county records management system and voiceless computer aided dispatch functions, software interfaces and necessary installation costs for law enforcement agencies within Waukesha County affiliated with the WCCC. The new system will allow police officers to talk to each other through an interface, run plates, get direct information on suspects, find out what units are responding to calls, etc. The other agencies involved have been notified that the grant was secured and how the budgeting process works. Tuma said Waukesha County didn't get the COPS grant it submitted earlier this year. These funds would have provided the equipment listed above for all police and fire vehicles in Waukesha County.

Sander said we are completing an ordinance that will provide bridge loans from the county to non-WCCC members for the purchase of this equipment in 2006 in case the COPS grant isn't received. The loans will be repaid in January 2007.

Paulson asked will the \$800K provide the equipment for all police vehicles associated with the WCCC? Tuma said yes. The agencies are responsible for paying for the mounting devices. Many already have the devices so the cost is minimal.

Paulson asked with this system, if the communities get the COPS grant and are not part of the WCCC, can they communicate with the WCCC? Tuma said these communities can “talk” device to device through Spillman. Now we can “talk” to the City of Waukesha through a different method. The new purchases would upgrade their equipment. The WCCC needs this upgrade to interface through Spillman. Tuma said some of the installed equipment had to be replaced.

Mitchell asked how did system-testing turn out? Pettersen said there were nominal failures on the infrastructure side. We have an issue in the Village of Mukwonago with interference from a Nextel cellular phone tower on the south side of I-43 but we expect this issue to go away. Tuma said this is a national problem with Nextel. Nextel is paying to switch frequencies because their old one interferes with public safety. The switch will be made sometime next year but there are some expected delays.

Esler asked if the grant was for \$800K? Tuma said we were awarded \$800K. Esler asked when will this come before the board? Sander said they will finish the ordinance next week for the grant. They will complete the ordinance for the COPS contingency plan later. The county sent communities a worksheet to help them figure out 25% of their costs and the necessary paperwork to request a loan from the county.

Review of Findings from the Health and Human Services Computer Projects Assessment

Hoffmann said his findings consisted of ten pages of recommendations for HHS, IS and countywide. Seven of those pages were recommendations for HHS. Hoffmann recommends maintaining Avatar. It is a sound application and the county should continue to use it as a core system. The system will need to be upgraded sometime in the future though. Peoplelink should be retained for the next five years with an understanding that in 2006 a separate project should be scheduled to provide additional enhancements to the application. For a five-year period, PeopleLink will serve well. It is a well-designed application.

Hoffmann said the key issue to be considered when moving projects forward is the available resources in HHS and IS. The best-case scenario includes a combined minimum of eight dedicated FTEs in HHS, not contractors, whose only function would be to support HHS. The department needs eight staff in order to be successful, accomplish all the proposed projects and meet all timelines. Hoffmann realizes that HHS and IS do not have the means to hire additional personnel.

Hoffmann also recommends that HHS reevaluate all proposed projects to find out if they have true business value, will provide cost savings, will increase productively, etc. He was able to identify 40 potential state projects that could come up any time for the department. When these state projects are implemented will influence the departmental workflow.

Hoffmann was asked to look at Peoplelink and options for replacement. Because he wasn't going through a formal RFI/ RFP process, he had a limited amount of data to investigate. Two of the companies he reviewed for possible replacements were Creative Socio Medic/Netsmart and Automated Case Management Systems. Hoffmann created a spreadsheet showing the current operational support cost of Peoplelink versus the cost of a replacement system. He went back to October 2004, looked at the internal cost for HHS, added 5% each year to cover possible increases and carried those costs out to 2010. He estimated it will cost HHS \$1.1 million over five years to support Peoplelink. The cost for Peoplelink this year is less than average because staff working on this project have been assigned to work on WisSACWIS.

Hoffmann said this project required him to create many diagrams. He distributed and reviewed a handout titled Data Flow/Interface Diagram, which shows HHS applications and interfaces that are continually supported by in-house staff. If Peoplelink is replaced, interfaces will have to be produced and applied.

Hoffmann reviewed a handout titled, HHS Proposed Project Timeline 2005 to 2011. He said what's obvious about this list is how many staff resources are working on several different projects simultaneously. When he

made a list of key staff and the tasks they are in charge of, he found many staff are over allocated 150-200% per year. The county doesn't have enough resources to work on all these programs. He looked into changing the amount of time staff spends on projects. If staff works 40 hours per week on all projects, the projects could be done by 2011 but it would be a push and everything would have to go perfectly. By reducing staff hours to 20 hours per week, the timeline is pushed to 2017. When he investigated project details, he couldn't find full outlines of project plans, return on investment or supporting documentation. Hoffmann made the recommendation to reevaluate everything on this list for effectiveness, doability, business value, cost, etc. Everything on the list is at a high risk of not being done on time. This will continue until staffing issues are addressed and HHS takes an aggressive approach to examine all projects with the understanding that at any given time, when a state project comes into to play, the resources will be drawn away from these projects. There are many unknowns on the list of state projects such as what resources would be required or when HHS needs to be involved. The state projects won't go away.

Paulson asked isn't five years a long time in the computer industry? Hoffmann said yes it is. There are projects on the list that absolutely need to be done. As long as HHS continues with AVATAR PM, the system needs to be maintained. The department also needs to make sure the vendor's enhancements and releases are put into place especially those that make their lives easier. The further upgrades are pushed out, the more the department loses out on upgrades and work won't get done. A lot needs to be done but the county only has limited resources. The introduction of contractors doesn't necessarily mean you get more done on projects because contractors take time away from the regular staff.

Mitchell asked did you ask HHS to rank projects by importance? Hoffmann said the department needs to take a more aggressive approach and look at how serious projects are for the betterment of the department. There are "nice to haves" and there are "absolutes." The department is going to have to determine what they really need and be more critical of the work they do.

Hoffmann said the study revealed to him that co-project management between HHS and IS doesn't work. The current system is mismanaged and not cost effective. The job needs to be consolidated. He recommended creating an enterprise office in IS to handle all the facets of these projects. Hoffman said he can provide the panel members his results on a CD.

Mundt said HHS is a very big department with large maintenance needs.

WiSACWIS Project Update

Hoffmann said we went live October 25 with phase IB of WiSACWIS. The project plan shows we begin work on phase II in January 2006 and the preliminary work has begun. He's asked HHS their intent with phase II to see if they want to proceed.

Hoffmann said Judy Schablinski, a contractor working with HHS and IS, found a unique problem with this system at the state level. The state has acknowledged the problem and that they need to make changes. The problem doesn't have a major impact on HHS right now.

Review of Electronic Document Management Strategy

Sander distributed and reviewed a handout titled, Records Management Improvement Action/Business Plan. He explained that in 2004, DOA brought in a consultant to analyze and review microfilming and imaging activity within the Records Management division and to make recommendations for improvement opportunities. The consultant was retained again in 2005 to facilitate a workgroup comprised of key staff to further evaluate and identify short and long-term customer needs and microfilming/imaging inventory countywide. The handout lists the workgroup's outcomes. Sander reviewed the seven division objectives and five strategies/actions items developed by the workgroup as listed in the handout.

Update on the Tax Records System Replacement Project

Biagioli said this update is not good news. Naegle said at the last meeting, he reported that we were moving into parallel production testing. The testing has uncovered many items that need to be addressed by the vendor such as reports not working, poor design, screens not functioning correctly, etc. We are working with the vendor to correct these issues including daily meetings. The county rigorously tests everything received from the vendor but had to delay testing because the vendor wasn't moving fast enough to resolve the issues. The tax team came to a consensus that everything needs to be in working order before the county accepts the end product. We are also working with the vendor to resolve collections and billing issues.

Sander reviewed for the committee how the county selected Easy Access. He explained that the original project manager was removed in March and replaced by the president of the company. The company wants to make this work but they aren't meeting the production schedule. We've been told that five to eight developers are working on this project. The county has taken on quality control work but we will have to back off on it when we hit tax season.

Biagioli said we are resurrecting our in-house tax system, Legacy, to generate the December tax bills. We will have to extend the license on the system to do this. We hope the issues can be addressed so we can parallel collections. Mundt said we will be able to extend the license at monthly or quarterly intervals.

Mitchell said this report isn't a huge shock to the Panel. It will be crisis management through the tax season.

Herzfeld asked if there were any positives or penalties worked into the contract? Biagioli said it's hard to put penalties into contracts because firms just ignore them. Sander said we are holding payment (\$189K or 47% of payment) for product and maintenance until the situation is taken care of. The county has asked the company to pay our consultant fees because the problems have increased the costs. Herzfeld said at his business, they have offered bonuses to companies to get software/computer issues completed on time. They have never had to pay a bonus.

Sander said there are a number of counties in Wisconsin watching to see how this system works because they are ready to purchase a new system. There are no great tax systems in Wisconsin right now. Behrend said that should be some incentive for the company to clear this up.

Review of Information Technology Plans for 2006

This item was not discussed at the meeting. It will be put on the December 9, 2005 agenda for discussion.

Motion to Adjourn

MOTION: Behrend moved, Mitchell second, to adjourn the meeting at 10 a.m. Motion carried: 4-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Duane E. Paulson, Secretary
Information Management Panel